

**AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:**

Please replace the paragraph that begins on page 106, line 13 with the following replacement paragraph:

The performance of various nested RT-PCR and real time RT-PCR methods were then compared for 121 respiratory samples from possible cases of SARS at the French hospital in Hanoi, Vietnam, taken between the 4th and the 17th day after the onset of the symptoms. Among these samples, 14 were found to be positive during a first test using the nested RT-PCR method targeting ORF1b (encoding replicase) as described initially by Bernhard Nocht Institute (BNI nested RT-PCR). Information relating to this test is available on the internet, at the address [http://www15.bnihamburg.de/bni2/neu2/getfile.acgi?area\\_eng1=diagnostics&pid=4112](http://www15.bnihamburg.de/bni2/neu2/getfile.acgi?area_eng1=diagnostics&pid=4112).